

**Address of the Rt Rev'd Bismark M. Avokaya  
Diocesan Bishop of Mundri, at the event of the Dedication of Bishop's Court (or Bishop's House)**

July 25<sup>th</sup> 2010

**Protocol:**

- The Most Rev'd. Canon Dr. Daniel Deng Bul, The Archbishop, the Primate and the Diocesan Bishop of Juba & Mama Debora.
- The Rt. Rev'd. Bullen A. Dolli, Chairman of the cluster and the Bishop of Lui (in absentia).
- The Rt. Rev'd. Dr. Eluzai G. Munda, the former Dean of the Province and the former Bishop of Mundri and Mama Fubi Munda.
- H. E. The Commissioner of Mundri West County and your wife,
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- County Heads of Departments present
- NGO Representatives
- Eng. Michael Masso, WHM, Team Leader and all your team members
- Distinguished guests,
- Ladies and gentlemen.

First and foremost, allow me to give God all the praise and thanks for making it possible for us to meet here once again to celebrate His goodness to us as diocese for what He has done for us and through us collectively –mainly in putting up these structures: the Bishop's Court and the residence of our partners –of the World Harvest Mission (WHM) team.

Secondly, I would like to greet you all in the Name of Jesus Christ our LORD and Saviour. And we welcome you all to the Diocese of Mundri. I must confess that, we in Mundri are so delighted that you were able to come and to celebrate God's Goodness with us today. We hope you happy stay with us in this God given opportunity.

About one year, seven months and five days today we met at the office where your Grace dedicated our office. And I remember you telling us that "next time I should be called to dedicate the Bishop's House". And later on during my address in the Cathedral in my address, I said and I am quoting:

*"... now that we have finished with the office, our next project is the construction of the house for the Bishop. And this will be Diocesan House for the Diocesan Bishop of Mundri. I only happened to be the current Bishop, but it will be there for the coming generations of the Bishops of Mundri."*

Yet at the event, it wasn't then clear as to how this would be realized? Given the daunting challenges we are facing and continue to face to date. But a modest residential house for any human being (and not only for a Bishop) is and should be a critical priority. Yet given our circumstances, it is often not the case, even if we want. However, as we meet today to celebrate the dedication of these houses, I would like to make it categorically clear that, this is not man's making but God's making alone even though we are Coworkers with God. In this respect, we need to give God alone all the praise, honour and glory.

However, let me caution you, do not ask me what is our next plan after this? Yet I would like to appeal to you all to work together with us. And give us what the LORD enables you to get and we will use it for its intended purpose. I know you are generous people and very soon we will begin to get your contribution for our future projects. Yes I know that you are generous people despite your poverty and the great example of sacrificial giving is the retired Rev'd and the retired Major of Police, Yona Walla and his family had shown us. Rev'd Yona has no cattle but was able to buy a bull worth hundreds of Sudanese Pounds (if not thousand) for this celebration today. Let me ask Rev'd. Yona and his dear wife Rebecca to stand up for want to ask sister Christine to take their official photos. We had already taken the photo of the poor bull before it met its needful death and I am asking Christine who is our Diocesan web-keeper to put their photo and the bull in our website! May the LORD bless you Reverend?

Your Grace, for us to reach this stage today it took efforts and collaborations of many people of different categories. This began with the former Bishop of Mundri, Dr. Eluzai G. Munda (and his team) when he asked the landlords to give this piece of land for the diocese. Likewise, individuals, families, congregations, private sector like Payii Roads and Bridges Company Ltd and our partner – World Harvest Mission. And this ranges from some people giving one Sudanese Pound, or ten Sudanese Pounds to those giving hundreds of pounds to thousand of Sudanese Pounds. In addition to that, some people gave, US\$50 (Fifty United States Dollars) and to others giving hundred dollars and to thousands of Dollars.

Moreover, some gave through sweating in hard labour be that digging, clearing, fetching water or cooking beans for those who worked on the hot sun etc and regardless of sex.

The house has seven rooms (including the sitting room), a kitchen and store built on the southern side of the house. It was estimated to cost SDG85, 600.00 (Eighty five thousand six hundred Sudanese Pounds only) which includes the cost of outside latrine. We are yet to put together all the details of the financial reports, but we are certain that the cost has exceeded the above-mentioned figures. However, the wiring is yet to be done and not to mention the cost of solar or generator which is needed for the house.

Your Grace, I am aware that sometimes as Pastors (and one of them) we are accused of avoiding hard labour. For instance, it is said that when someone dies we don't want to dig the grave. But when it is time for burial, we take our Bibles, hymn and prayer books and make ourselves responsible for the burial. However, I want to tell you that, during our work on this house, Pastors did not only announce that people should come here and work. But they had their own day of working here as pastors, even the Principal of Bishop Ngalamu Theological College (BNTC), brought his students, Faculty and support staff here with their own food and did some work. Likewise, our members of the youth and laity did their part and continue to do so today as well. Moreover, even the retired Canons like Yona, Yokobede and Yorobama, did their part to ensure that this house is finished.

But I may be a liar if I say that everyone in Mundri did that! Certainly some people did not; however, I know in our future projects they will together with us for the good of this diocese and our communities.

Your Grace, finally, and to everyone who did something however small but led to the completion of this houses, I want to pay grateful tribute to you for having faithfully carrying the burden of bringing these work to completion. Our administration team, the Bishop's Commissionary, Canon Francis Mari'ba and not least the Diocesan Secretary and our colleagues in the office and partners –WHM. Special thanks go o the technical team, Ustaz Gilbert Yousif for designing the house and encouragement, Eng. Michael Masso for technical advice, our Diocesan Treasurer (Mr. Kennet Korayi) who sends his apology as he is away on mission to Holland, and our Contractor and his team. Our appreciation goes to all those who worked behind the scenes for the realization of this project. And my deep and sincere gratitude to all those involved and to you the guests for coming. Indeed we are enormously encouraged by your presence and support and may the LORD bless you all. Once again thank you very much indeed.